

## MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment a joint resolution of the House of the following title:

H.J. Res. 80. Joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2000, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 105-277, the Chair, on behalf of the majority leader, announces the appointment of Deborah C. Ball, of Georgia, to serve as a member of the Parents Advisory Council on Youth Drug Abuse for a three-year term.

## ISSUES, NOT SOLUTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NUSSLE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDI) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. TANCREDI. Mr. Speaker, I must say that I had originally requested only 5 minutes, but a number of things have happened in the last several hours that have forced me to come back and request more time to address the issues that I wanted to bring to the attention of the body today.

Certainly, some of the things that have been discussed by previous speakers here lead me to take the floor today and to do so for at least some more time than 5 minutes.

When I was in high school, our class used to have the task at the end of the year of coming up with a motto, among other things, to attach to ourselves for the rest of eternity and it would always be placed in the little book, the annual. It would say the class motto was such and such for this. Mr. Speaker, I have a suggestion after listening to the discussion for the last hour. I have a suggestion of what our colleagues on the other side of the aisle might use for their class motto this session, and it would be this: "Issues, not solutions."

Mr. Speaker, let me just suggest that as the class motto for the Democrats of the 106th Congress. That their real purpose is to have an issue to run on and to avoid the possibility of achieving a solution in this body at all costs.

Now, I say that recognizing that it is certainly not a revelation. I bring to the body that this is the strategy that the Democrats are employing. I say that because the minority leader has said that. The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) has indicated in articles that I have read, and certainly have been brought to the attention on the floor in the past, that it is his purpose to try and present as many obstacles as he possibly can to the accomplishment of the goals established by the majority in the area of education reform, in the area of tax reform, in any area important to the people of the country, there they would be.

It is not surprising, therefore, when we look at the majority responsibility

of the Congress, that is the passage of 13 appropriations bills, that when we look at how that eventually got done, it got done without the help of our Members on the other side. Without the help of any of them. Maybe three or four at a time would come on board, but almost always it was the Republicans in the Congress that had to carry the load because everybody over there was going to play hard ball because they want issues, not solutions.

The last thing they want, in fact, is a solution to the problem. So much rhetoric has been devoted to the Social Security issue. I am so glad to hear that at least there is a concern on the other side with regard to Social Security and, in fact, holding it sacrosanct, because that is a very interesting thing. We, in fact, passed a law, passed a bill out of this House. It went over to the other side and that law was designed to, in fact, codify this idea of holding Social Security sacrosanct. Not using it for the general fund. Something that we even hear the President saying that he agrees to.

But what has happened, Mr. Speaker, I ask? Where is that bill? And why is it not now part of the solution to the Social Security issue?

Well, of course, it is because the Senate Democrats have had a filibuster. The issue has been brought forward five times at least in the Senate, and each time it has been filibustered by the Democrats and essentially killed.

So where is the desire for the solution here? It is not their desire. It is, in fact, to maintain an issue to go into the next campaign with.

Beyond that, when the discussion resolves to the next stage, and that is the fix for Social Security, where is the President's plan for that? Has anyone heard of the President's plan? I certainly have not. I recognize fully well that the continuation of the Social Security system is in great, great jeopardy; and we must do something to change that. And I do not even suggest for a moment that not spending Social Security funds for general fund purposes will solve the Social Security problem. It will not. It does, in fact, however, slow the growth of government quite dramatically and makes us a little more honest to our constituents. Those two things are pretty good things in and of themselves.

But if, in fact, there is such a desire to fix Social Security, then of course we should hear something out of the White House about how we should go about doing that. That would be nice. That would be good. But we have not. Why have we not heard that, Mr. Speaker? Let me suggest the reason is because it does not fit the motto. The motto is, remember: "Issues, not solutions."

## COLUMBINE HIGH SCHOOL AND GUN CONTROL

Mr. TANCREDI. Mr. Speaker, let me go on to the purpose of my original request for this time to speak. It is my understanding that today a group of Members of this body held a press con-

ference in which they unveiled a clock of sorts. And this clock, I am told, has recorded the amount of time, minutes and hours and days, since the event at Columbine High School. And it is meant, I suppose, well, I know it is meant as a political gag in order to try and embarrass the Congress for not having, quote, moved ahead on gun legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I can understand the desire on the part of a lot of people, especially as we move to the very end of the session, to grasp at straws to do the most outrageous things in order to try to get the attention of the general public and in order to try and score some sort of political advantage.

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But I must say, Mr. Speaker, as the Representative from Columbine, from that area, the school is half a mile from my home, and my neighbors have children there, and we suffered through this event together.

I must tell my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, that to have this kind of political shenanigan pulled at this late date to try and remind us of when Columbine occurred, let me tell my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, there is not a parent in my district, there is not a parent of a single child who was murdered at that school or injured in that school who needs to be reminded of when that happened.

There is not a single living soul in my district that needs to be told when that occurred, how long ago, because it is etched indelibly in our memories and in my mind.

To suggest that any action taken subsequent to that time by this Congress could possibly have changed the situation there is, of course, both ludicrous and hypocritical. It is especially hypocritical, Mr. Speaker, because of course this Congress did attempt to address the issue of gun safety.

There was a bill, Mr. Speaker. There was a bill. It made it to the floor. H.R. 2122. Now, maybe it was not a perfect piece of legislation. There were certainly things about it that I had concerns about. But let me just go it just to remind all of us what exactly it was that we were talking about in that particular piece of legislation.

Under current law, background checks are not conducted at gun shows concerning transactions by private vendors but, instead, are only required of Federal licensees. This allows for a loophole of sorts in the acquisition of firearms.

There was an amendment proposed as a matter of fact by a Democrat, by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL). That amendment I believe was the most accommodating option, both in keeping guns out of the hands of the criminals and in protecting the rights of gun owners across the country. Certainly it was controversial. There were many people in my own district, certainly people in my own constituency that said it still went too far. As a